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CLASSIFICATION **CONFIDENTIAL** CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY REPORT NO. **00457R005400450013-3**

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

25X1A

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 3 Aug 50

SUBJECT Steel Construction at Brezno

NO. OF PAGES 1

PLACE
ACQUIRED

25X1A

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

25X1A

DATE OF
INFO.

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REPORT NO.

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- 25X1X 1. The narrow Iron Valley in which the Podbrezova (Pl9/D06) iron works is situated is too small to allow for further expansion of the plant. Other plants in the vicinity are either too small or the area near them is built up. The only land suitable for the construction of a new factory is at Brezno (Pl9/D16). Originally, it had been decided that during the Two Year Plan (1947 - 1948) the Tatra Works would build a branch factory at Brezno for the production of railway cars. After the plans had been approved and the land purchased, it was discovered that existing factories could produce more railway cars than the Ministry of Transport could purchase. Furthermore, Poland has a huge plant for producing cars at Wroclaw (Breslau - P52/C11). Although the proposed plant for railway cars was canceled from the Two Year Plan, Communist political pressure was strong for the building of some sort of plant at Brezno and the whole project was turned over to the enterprise at Podbrezova.
2. Because of the lack of space and workers at Piesok (Pl9/T02), the management at Podbrezova decided to transfer the construction of parts for bridges to Brezno. Work was begun during 1947, and by 1949 the new plant was functioning with a staff of approximately 400 workers. Recently the staff has been increased to 800, and the following items are being produced: bridge members, riveted and welded structural pieces for factory buildings, cranes, dredging equipment, and large low-pressure vessels for use in such places as chemical plants. The overall production target for this plant during 1950 is 30,000 tons of such products.
3. From a military standpoint, the plant at Brezno is only of secondary importance (production of bridge parts, etc.); however, the factory building itself is large and modern enough to permit conversion to the production of such things as artillery gun-carriages and tank parts. One of the most critical factors is the shortage of labor of all kinds, a result of the over-industrialization of the Iron River valley.

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Class. Changed To: **TS S C**
Auth: **HN 78-2**
Date: **20 JUN 1978**
By: **[Signature]**

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